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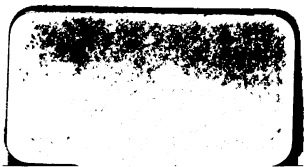
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Gough Adds, Oxon
— f. 178



REPORT
TO
THE CURATORS
OF THE
BODLEIAN LIBRARY.

MAY, MDCCCLXIV.

Gough Adds. Oxon 8^o 1/2^o.

REPORT.

DEAR MR. VICE-CHANCELLOR,

I AM required by a minute made at the last meeting of the Curators to report to them on the subjects following:—

1. The progress of the new Catalogue.
2. The Classification of the Library.
3. The Catalogues of the MSS. at present going on—their cost—with the work remaining to be done.

For the first,—“The progress of the new Catalogue” is as satisfactory as I could expect. Mr. Hackman’s division has advanced so far as the middle of the Letter B, available to the Reader;

whilst he himself has prepared copy for transcribers to C.

If Mr. Macray has not made corresponding progress, it is to be attributed to his having commenced at a portion of the Catalogue done carelessly in the first instance, and so demanding a more careful and tedious revision, especially in the case of anonymous works. "G—Gl." inclusive is in the hands of the Reader, and copy has been prepared as far as "Go."

I am the more satisfied with the work as it proceeds, and believe fully that it is the best Catalogue for our use. I see no reason why it should not reach its completion in the time originally specified.

II. On the subject of the "Classification of the Library" I must speak more at length. I would beg to remind the Curators, in the first place, that classification is of two kinds:—either (1), by the juxtaposition of works of the same class in distinct portions of the Library to be set apart for them, which I will call the Local Arrangement; or (2), by a classified Catalogue, i. e. the titles of books written out and arranged according to their subject matter. The plan I propose to adopt with respect to our collections, and to which I ask the Curators' sanction, has to do with both of the kinds specified.

For the first, I would submit the following modification :—

I. We are forbidden by the tenure on which we hold several of our most important benefactions (the Selden, the Douce, the Malone, and the Gough Libraries) to break them up and merge them in the general collection. Hence a classification of the whole Library becomes impossible. This idea, therefore, I set aside at once. Neither would I advocate the breaking up a large portion of the Library as it at present stands, and has stood for many years, for two reasons: *one*, that, although much of it is already to a certain extent arranged on a classified plan, and that to incorporate might appear an easy thing, yet that I do not think the result would be (situated as we are at present) equivalent to the labour and pains bestowed. That labour, as might be easily shown in detail, would be enormous; nor do I think that the student would gain much (to instance one class, Theology) by having the writings of the Fathers and Schoolmen in close juxta-position with those of more recent divines. So, secondly, I think it would be a great pity to break up and distribute amongst the school-books of the present day our collections from the deservedly admired presses of the Aldus family. I have witnessed the great pleasure and

information that the isolation of these books has given to many learned visitors of the Library. I have the same feeling with respect to another very curious and indeed important class of books; I allude to the *Editiones Principes*, and works issued from our own and foreign presses before or immediately after the commencement of the Sixteenth Century.

And perhaps this will be the proper place at which to draw the attention of the Curators to the amount of local classification actually existing in the Library as it at present stands. They are—our Topographical works, arranged by counties as an appendix to the Gough Collection; the Drama, as an appendix to Malone; Parliamentary Reports; Law Reports and Publications affecting the practices of the different Courts; Acts of Parliament, private and public; some 2,000 out of 3,000 volumes of Pamphlets; a large collection of Dissertations by members of foreign Universities; Early Italian and Spanish books; and some others of minor importance. With these classes I do not propose, at all events for the present, to interfere. There remains, however, over and above, a very large collection of books which I would subject (one half, at all events) to a local arrangement. They are the accumulations

of the Library from the year 1824 to the present time, and comprise some 70,000 volumes. At present they stand arranged, in alphabetical order, according to the year in which they were published, and 25,000 have also a reference number attached to them. The Curators might possibly feel disposed to leave these last, for the time at all events, as they are, and for the present make our experiment with the remainder.

I do not, however, the less press upon the attention of the Curators the necessity there exists for securing to the Library, as opportunities may arise, the whole of the building comprising the Schools Quadrangle; for though now, from the pressing need of a new catalogue, I do not think such an undertaking desirable or even possible, yet I should hope one day that very much of those collections, acquired by the Library previous to the dates I have mentioned, may be added to the classified system.

Before, however, leaving this branch of the subject, it is but fair to put before the Curators the incompleteness which attaches to all local classification in a rapidly increasing collection such as ours. In the British Museum, where there is unlimited room and labour, and the system may be supposed to be carried out in all its completeness, I find

books in the same branch of the same subject separated at a long interval the one from the other ; an interval which must always be in proportion to the time of their issue.

2. I come now to the second kind of classification I proposed to consider, that, namely, which is written. The advantage of this over the other arises from the fact, that it is possible by it to bring together the subjects in more close proximity than can be done on the previous system. This plan, therefore, from the commencement of the new Catalogue, has been constantly before me, and I have caused an extra slip of each entry to be written with a view, subsequently, to such slips being arranged on a classified plan. A copy of this plan, as drawn up and acted upon by myself, I beg to submit for the Curators' inspection. The gentlemen engaged upon the Catalogue have since abandoned the plan of arranging the slips by subjects, on the ground that it occupied more time than they thought it worth. The slips, however, remain and are continued, and are available at any moment for such arrangement, whenever it may be determined on. My own opinion, however, is that we should use all our strength in bringing the Alphabetical Catalogue to its completion, and then directing that same

strength to the carrying out of a complete classified Catalogue of the whole Library. One very important reason for preferring this kind of classification in our own case is that, save in the case of the Camera, the general reader is debarred from access to the localities where the books are deposited.

III. With respect to the Catalogue of MSS. "now going on, with their cost, and the MSS. still remaining to be catalogued," I have to state that the only Catalogue now in hand is that of the Syriac MSS, by Mr. Payne Smith. This, indeed, save a portion of the index, is complete. Mr. Smith proposes at once to enter upon a catalogue of some Arabic MSS. collected by Bruce, (and others since purchased,) in number about 150. This will still leave, in the Oriental department, uncatalogued some 2000 Hebrew MSS. purchased from Michael, Oppenheim, and others; 1200 Persian MSS, being portions of the collections of Sir William and Sir Gore Ouseley, that of the latter given to the Library by the late W. Elliott, Esq. of Calcutta; besides a few in the Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Zend, and Pali languages. Of the remaining collections there are,—

1. Of Dr. Rawlinson's MSS, besides classes A. and B, of which there is already a printed Catalogue,

there remain 800 in class C; all of which have been catalogued by Mr. Macray, and the first half indexed. This work has been discontinued since the removal of Mr. Macray to the superintendence of one portion of the Catalogue of printed books.

Of the same collector we have also some 220 MSS, comprising the works of mediæval and later poets: of 150 of these a catalogue exists in MS, drawn up by the late Dr. Bliss.

Fifteen hundred additional, the greater portion discovered in cupboards, tables, and elsewhere, within the last three years. Very many of these were loose papers, which have been bound together according to their subjects, and so are more or less available to the reader.

One hundred and ten volumes of letters, including the correspondence of Hearne, Rawlinson, Dodwell, Bowles, Baker, and others—ninety of these volumes have been catalogued with index, by Dr. Bliss.

2. There is also Dr. Ballard's collection of letters comprised in fifty quarto volumes, of which there is a good catalogue and index in MS.

3. Browne Willis' Collections, in 110 volumes, for the Parochial History of Bucks; catalogued in MS.

4. Carte's Historical Collections, known as the

Ormond Papers, catalogued in MS. The University Press will probably undertake the calendaring of these, so soon as the Clarendon Papers, now in the hands of Messrs. Macray and Ogle, shall be completed.

5. Four hundred Liturgical MSS. of Horæ, Missals, etc. of foreign Churches.

6. Dr. Thomas Smith's Letters and Papers, comprised in forty volumes; of which a full catalogue exists in MS.

It will be seen, from the above statement, that much remains to be done in the department of MSS; to which it must be added that there is in the Library a large collection of Charters, Rolls, and Accounts of much interest and use to the compiler of family or local history, of which we have no catalogue whatever. It is very important that all these should be arranged and described; and I had hoped myself to have been able to find leisure for the work, but each day has hitherto been so occupied by its special duty, that that leisure time has not arrived.

I must leave it, therefore, for the consideration of the Curators, whether it would not be advisable to meet these difficulties, either by appointing a supernumerary assistant on the European MSS. not yet catalogued, and continuing the services of

Mr. Payne Smith in the Oriental Department, or by transferring Mr. Smith to the European Department, and placing the catalogue of the Oriental MSS. in the hands of some other competent scholar.

Under any circumstances, the describing these MSS. must involve a considerable outlay, which the funds of the Library are ill able to meet. I would propose, therefore, that an appeal be made to Convocation to help us in carrying out the Catalogue of Printed Books. I find that in 1837 four hundred pounds a year for not more than five years were voted for this purpose; besides which, sums of money were, from time to time, granted by the University Press for the same object.

Believe me to remain,

Dear Mr. Vice-Chancellor,

Yours very faithfully,

H. O. COXE,

Librarian.

MAY 24, 1864.

To the Rev. the Vice-Chancellor.

